474 Special mention should be made of the hopyard, which before the war was a very profitable enterprise, bringing in a gross income of 65,000 roubles in 1940. The hops died out during the war and were replanted in 1946; they are expected to produce a marketable crop this year (1947).

433 Productivity of the Lenin collective farm[1] in 1946 was down to
241 40 per cent. below pre-war yields. The grain yield was 1,0 to 1.2
474 metric tons per hectare, compared with yields of 1.6 to 1.8 tons per hectare before the war. The potato crop was only 8 tons per hectare, half the pre-war yield of 16 tons, because the farm had unusually bad luck with potatoes in 1946, several fields being washed out completely.

The extreme decline is attributed to shortages of artificial fertilizers, formerly used in large amounts; the shortage of manure, resulting from the greatly diminished livestock herds; and the lack of machinery and manpower.

Ploughing is shallower than before the war; and seed bed preparation, less careful. The farmers realize that their ploughing and seed bed preparation are below the standards of good farm practice, but they are unable to do better until they get more tractors, implements, and horses. Before the war this farm customarily hired three or four tractors from the M.T.S.; in 1946 it was able to secure only one. Only 86 horses were available in 1946, and these on the average were smaller than before the war, and could not be fed as well. However, productivity in 1946 was greater than in the preceding year, chiefly because the farm had more men, more horses, and more equipment.

The Extent of the Post-War Recovery

433 In the Byelorussian Republic as a whole the crop year 1945 was the
241 first full year of reoccupation by Byelorussians. By 1946 agricultural production had made definite progress toward supplying the population with food. The sown area in 1946 reached 76 per cent. of pre-war, but the level of yields was depressed by inadequate soil preparation, shortages of fertilizers, and unfavourable weather. As a result the grain crop, although better than in 1945, was still only half of pre-war. The vegetable crop, grown largely from UNRRA seeds, was from 75 to 80 per cent. of pre-war in total production; while the potato crop, because rainfall was heavy during part of the growing season and because plantings were only 60 per cent. of pre-war, reached less than half pre-war in total output.

Seed Production

433 The inadequacy of seed supplies has been a serious hindrance to
246 full recovery of the pre-war area of cultivation. Particularly short were vegetable seeds (except potatoes), clovers, vetch, and timothy and other grasses, most of which are biennials or perennials requiring two years for the production of seed. There is also a shortage of flax seed;

[1] [See cat 116, pp. 15-16 - Ag 1945]

433 and the restoration of this crop is important not only to provide fibre
246 for the linen industry, but also to supply linseed oil, which is then further refined to produce edible oil, supplementing animal fats in the diet.

Clovers are especially needed to plant alternately in the areas where flax is grown. Both clover and timothy seed production were lost during the war. The improvement of these crops would do much to assist the rehabilitation of decimated and under-sized livestock herds. Plans have been made to reach a self-sustaining level of vegetable seed production by the spring of 1948. Adapted and satisfactory varieties of UNRRA seed are being used as parent stock.

Fertilizers

483 Fertilizers are an urgent requirement, as the low fertility of Byelorussian soil necessitates using large quantities both of manure and of chemicals. All are in extremely short supply. The fertilizer available in 1946 was only 15 per cent. of pre-war. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture estimated that in 1946 only 25 to 30,000 tons of potash were used, as compared with 160,000 tons before the war. As an example, one collective farm in the Polotsk oblast used before the war about 600,000 tons of fertilizers, but had only 500 tons in 1946.

In view of the shortage of manure and of the naturally slow progress in restoration of the soil-fertilizing grass and leguminous crops, large-scale measures are being taken in the B.S.S.R. to utilize peat as a fertilizer; the plan for 1947 is to use over 5 million tons.

Drainage Projects

312 Before the war Byelorussia was executing a plan for the ultimate drainage and reclamation of four million hectares of swamp land. Progress had been made by 1941 to the extent of reclaiming and planting 270,000 hectares. During the war the drainage system deteriorated, and in some places was deliberately destroyed to flood areas for defence purposes. Trench-digging and dredging machinery was removed by the Germans. Work on the restoration of the drainage canals began shortly after liberation; 25,000 hectares of drained land were restored to cultivation in 1945, and it was expected to restore an additional 33,000 hectares in 1946.

Farm Machinery

407 Farm machinery was, and is, badly depleted. In 1946 only three to five per cent. of the seeding of crops was done by machines; and tractors ploughed only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the cropland. The number of tractors available in 1946 was 25 to 30 per cent. of pre-war; but most of the machines were in bad condition, having been patched together from spare parts. It was hoped that UNRRA would be able to make early deliveries of tractors to the B.S.S.R.; but despite the urgency of the need, the Administration was not able to supply any